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14. ABSTRACT

While the main body of the chaplain's work has not changed over time there have been a number of recent factors that have impacted his or her role and mission. These dynamics have now more than ever necessitated that the operational commander provides clear guidance through the Joint Force Chaplain to the area chaplains. The guidance should clearly delineate and restrict those activities that could negatively impact the mission. Such guidance will help the tactical chaplain to perform his or her duties in a manner congruent with joint force mission objectives and avoid inadvertently detracting from that mission and will serve to underpin the chaplain's role as a contributing member to the operational mission.

There have been several recent incidents involving chaplains that have stressed relations with our coalition partners and have provided our adversaries with information operations leverage. This paper will provide an overview of the role and function of chaplains as specified in Joint Pub 1-05, analyze several chaplain activities that have caused concern for joint commanders and consider some of the implications of curtailing controversial activity. The emphasis of the paper is to provide recommendations for the joint commander to consider when directing chaplains in his or her area of operations. The arguments for and against the employment of chaplains in operational settings are considered around four major themes: 1) Chaplain access to the operational environment to provide pastoral service to the troops; 2) concerns about proselytizing; 3) the chaplain's interaction with the civilian community; and 4) legal considerations.

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Go Forth and Multiply: How the Chaplain's Actions can have Strategic Impact
in the Current Operational Environment

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the
requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily
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Signature: _____

23 October 2009

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Abstract

While the main body of the chaplain's work has not changed over time there have been a number of recent factors that have impacted his or her role and mission. These dynamics have now more than ever necessitated that the operational commander provides clear guidance through the Joint Force Chaplain to the area chaplains. The guidance should clearly delineate and restrict those activities that could negatively impact the mission. Such guidance will help the tactical chaplain to perform his or her duties in a manner congruent with joint force mission objectives and avoid inadvertently detracting from that mission and will serve to underpin the chaplain's role as a contributing member to the operational mission.

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Introduction

In the irregular warfare environment that U.S. forces face today, the role of the

chaplain has expanded in ways that carry risks and benefits for the joint force commander

that are not adequately addressed in current doctrine. The complex environment in which

chaplains now find themselves operating requires that joint doctrine be expanded and

codified to clearly delineate those roles.

Chaplains are in a unique position to positively contribute to the joint mission through

many of their typical pastoral activities. Some other ministry activities, however, while

perhaps very appropriate in some areas, are actually detrimental in others, to the point that in

some operational environments misguided chaplain involvement may even jeopardize the

success of the mission.

The manner in which the chaplain defines and performs his or her role in the

operational environment can positively or negatively affect achieving the commander's

mission in joint operations. The typical activities in which chaplains are involved in

providing direct religious support and chaplain participation in civil military operations, in

humanitarian assistance and key leader engagement, each need to be clearly delineated in

joint doctrine so as to provide a baseline of understanding from which chaplains of diverse

backgrounds may operate.

In many of today's operational environments, religion and religious issues are central

concerns to understanding the culture of our coalition partners as well as that of our

adversaries.[1] Current counterinsurgency doctrine emphasizes the importance of

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[1] Douglas M. Johnson, "We Neglect Religion at our Peril," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings,* January 2002, in
U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Religious Support for Joint Operations*, Joint Publication 1-05, Washington, D.C.: 9
June 2004, II-1, and Paul A. Marshall, "Religion and Global Affairs: Disregarding Religion, *SAIS Review,* Vol.
18, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 1998), 13-14.

understanding the underlying characteristics of the population. Listed as primary among these characteristics along with the historical, political, and economic considerations, are the religious orientation and fervency of the population.[2]

This paper will provide the commander with a basic understanding of some of the dynamics that motivate chaplain actions in the joint environment. The intention is to help the commander establish guidelines that will identify and set limits for religious activity. Joint Publication (JP) 1-05, *Religious Support for Joint Operations*, offers the commander a solid foundation as to how chaplains are organized within the joint operational environment.

The focus of JP 1-05, however, is on providing religious support to U.S. military personnel, rather than addressing guidelines of religious activity that potentially could have adverse impact on mission accomplishment. The private worship and devotion that chaplains lead is not now, nor has it ever been, an issue of concern. Chaplains are generally free to conduct worship as prescribed by their endorsing religious body.[3] In many areas of operation, especially in Islamic states, the religious questions that commanders must now consider are fundamental to the culture of the people. How might the religious activity of our personnel affect these relationships? How might a chaplain's conduct affect the relationship with coalition allies? These are questions that commanders must consider as they perhaps now more than ever will affect mission accomplishment.

Every military person has been exposed to chaplains at one level or the other throughout his or her career. From entry level school and training environments to senior

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[2] John D. Waghelstein and Donald Chisolm. *Analyzing Insurgency* (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College, 2006), 7.
[3] U.S. Code Title X, Sub. C, Part II, Chapter 555, Section 6031, Paragraph (a), "An officer in the Chaplain Corps may conduct public worship according to the manner and forms of the church of which he is a member."

afloat and shore commands, chaplains have been a part of the military landscape. Although most service members have some familiarity with the chaplain's pastoral role, few understand the full scope of the chaplain's responsibilities. Few non-chaplains know how individuals are selected for appointment as chaplains in the uniformed services, how they are then vetted for assignment, and what their primary function is within the military institution.[4] Most importantly, commanders are often faced with the question of how to best employ their assigned chaplain to take full advantage of the unique benefits that chaplains bring to the command, and in today's environment, how to set appropriate limits to assure that the chaplain does indeed contribute, rather than detract, from the mission.

Joint doctrine needs to support the joint commander in setting guidelines that clearly delineate what religious activities are appropriate and what activities are not given the sensitivities of the environment. By so doing, the commander will effectively focus the chaplain's effort on those aspects of ministry that will enhance the mission, rather that detract from it.

This task, however, is rife with complications. On the one hand, as Americans we believe fundamentally in the right of religious expression. These freedoms are guaranteed by our Constitution and are deeply entrenched in the American way of life.[5] On the other hand, some religious freedom of expression must necessarily be limited for military personnel in the interest of mission accomplishment.[6]

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[4] Emilie K. Bindon, "Entangled Choices: Selecting Chaplains for the United States Armed Forces," *Alabama Law Review,* 56, no. 247 (2004): 280-283.
[5] In the U.S. Constitution, freedom of religion as a fundamental human right is guaranteed by the Establishment Clause, and the Free Exercise Clause of the Bill of Rights.
[6] Navy Instruction 1730.8B states, "Department of the Navy policy is to accommodate the doctrinal or traditional observances of the religious faith practiced by individual members when these doctrines or observances will not have an adverse impact on military readiness, individual or unit readiness, unit cohesion, health, safety, discipline, or mission accomplishment."

Questions regarding religion and religious conduct are primarily social questions that are underpinned by visceral and deeply held beliefs. How the commander negotiates these conflicting interests is key for maintaining good order and discipline, and ultimately for mission accomplishment. He or she can best manage these problems by providing clear guidance to chaplains as to what is and what religious activity is permissible in the area of operations. So doing will help to clarify the ambiguity surrounding the chaplain's role and help them to remain an invaluable contributor to the mission.

Background Information

Chaplains are familiar to military personnel as the role of the chaplain is firmly entrenched in military culture. The chaplain's benefit to the military institution is widely acknowledged and is for the most part unchallenged.[7] The lack of familiarity with precisely what is the chaplain's role makes all the more necessary a clear statement of that role as it impacts upon joint operations.

Joint Publication 1-05 – *Religious Support in Joint Operations*

JP 1-05, *Religious Support for Joint Operations*, delineates the chaplain's role in the joint arena. The current version of JP 1-05, dated 9 Jun 2004, seeks to broaden the concept the chaplain's role from that of "Religious Ministry Support" to "Religious Support." Navy Chaplain Commander Bradford E. Ablesen, notes that the earlier version failed to:

- deal with religion beyond accommodation issues for U.S. personnel
- provide a meaningful framework for religious analysis in an area of operations
- distinguish the responsibilities of chaplains with regard to the levels of war; thus the same duties are assumed for unified command and battalion-level chaplains

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[7] In 1979, two Harvard Law students, Joel Katcoff and Allen Wieder, challenged the legitimacy of the Army chaplaincy as a violation of the First Amendment Establishment Clause. The Second Circuit Court of Appeals upheld in *Katcoff v. Marsh* the necessity of the chaplaincy to ensure the free exercise of religion for military personnel. There have been other challenges to military chaplaincy, but the precedent set in Katcoff has endured.

- define the relationships among unified command, joint task force, and supporting service element chaplaincies[8]

The 4 June 2004 version does go beyond simply detailing the chaplain organization and administrative responsibilities to address several of these issues by offering a rudimentary "Guide to Advising on Religions."[9] While the vagaries of chaplain responsibilities at the various levels of war and command relationships seem to persist in the updated version, the guide does list several questions a chaplain might address when advising his or her commander on the religious dynamics in a given area of operations.

The questions in JP 1-05, Appendix A, address a broad framework of general understanding of the religious makeup within a certain area of operations. Questions such as the religions and the number of clergy that are in the area might well be within the chaplain's ability to assess if such data is generally available. It is doubtful, however, that the chaplain by virtue of his or her role would have any special insight into or awareness of the religious demographics of a particular area. The forms and frequency of worship are also listed as an area of concern, which also might be within the chaplain's ability to address in a general way.

Among the concerns for the chaplain to access and provide advice to the commander, however, are issues such as "the relationship between religion and the motivation of indigenous people," "the relationship between religion and trans-cultural communication," "the socio-economic influence of religion," and religious "relations with the government."[10] These questions could well be outside of the purview and expertise of many chaplains, regardless of his or her rank or experience. Generally, chaplains simply do not have the

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[8] Bradford E. Ableson, "A Time for Conversion: Chaplains and Unified Commanders," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 32, (Autumn 2002), 99.
[9] JP 1-05, Appendix A.
[10] Ibid.

academic background or experience to allow them to credibly address these kinds of questions.

Even in cases where chaplains were able to address these questions, might they not be better addressed by the J-2, rather than by the chaplain? Historically, when the chaplain has been asked to comment on religion, it has been to "teach the main doctrines of various World Religions to engender respect for diverse views and promote peace and harmony,"[11] not to perform analysis for the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment, to which these questions seem to be more allied.

JP 1-05 notes the possibility for a conflict of interest by the chaplain performing such task as so doing might even compromise the chaplain's non-combatant status.[12] The point is reiterated in the Army Chief of Chaplains' Policy #3, dated 30 Sep 08, which says, ". . . a chaplain and/or assistant will not collect or provide information as a human intelligence source," and that such meetings with religious leaders are "to build relationships of mutual trust and respect, promote human rights, and deepen cultural understanding between unit personnel and host nation citizens."[13]

JP 1-05 indicates in figure II-3, "Notional Joint Force Chaplain Educational Development," commensurate levels of training for joint force chaplains functioning at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. There is no special training, however, Professional Military Education or otherwise, that chaplains undergo before deployment to a given area of operations that would necessarily qualify him or her to credibly answer these questions.

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[11] John W. Brinsfield, "The Army Chaplaincy and World Religions: From Individual Ministries to Chaplain Corps Doctrine, *The Army Chaplaincy*, (Winter-Spring 2009), 15.

[12] JP 1-05, II-4, "Extreme care must be taken to ensure that the chaplain's status as a noncombatant is not compromised" when advising "regarding religion and religious support."

[13] Army Chief of Chaplains Policy #3, "Religious Leader Liaison," 30 September 2008 in Stephen A. Schaick, "Examining the Role of Chaplains as Non-Combatants While Involved in Religious Leader Engagement/Liaison," (research paper, Air War College, Air University, 17 February 09).

Where religious and cultural differences are many times very subtle, yet profoundly important, generalizations as to the meaning and difference of religious practice could well be counterproductive in making any assessment of a given area of operations.[14]

The lack of such expertise is by no means limited to the Chaplain Corps. The Department of State and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations bear the same limitations. Liora Danan of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington D. C. notes that "training on religion within U.S. government agencies is often overly focused on doctrine and theology or addresses ‚cultural issues' instead of religion specifically."[15] Danan goes on to say that, "while s*ome* new policies and initiatives have been significant, the U.S. government has a long way to go in developing full analyses and coherent strategies . . . [the leadership] do not really understand and have little training on the nuances of non-Judeo-Christian religions." [emphasis in original][16]

While JP 1-05 does seek to address ways in which the chaplain can better function in his or her role as "religious advisor" to the command, there remains a wide gap in chaplain expertise to be able to adequately fulfill that role. Chaplain historian, John Brinsfield, and Army Colonel (CH) Eric Wester, note some of the ethical issues that arise in using chaplains in such roles. Quoting a senior Navy chaplain who has had firsthand experience in supervising chaplains in Afghanistan, they say that "even the best chaplains have limited language skills and cultural understanding, especially when a village may have pluralistic religious groups competing with one another."[17] Very few chaplains indeed are likely to

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[14] Liora Danan, "Transatlantic Dialogue on Religion and Politics: Religion and Politics in European Integration and the Transatlantic Relationship," http://www.aicgs.org/documents/danan.oct06.pdf, (accessed 19 September 09, 6).

[15] Ibid, 6.

[16] Ibid, 3.

[17] John W. Brinsfield and Eric Wester, "Ethical Challenges for Commanders and Their Chaplains," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no 54, (3rd Quarter 2009), 20-21.

have the academic expertise required to provide the level of advice suggested in JP 1-05. It should be noted, however, that Brinsfield and Wester point out many of the benefits of chaplain involvement in one-on-one, direct relationship building, which will be discussed in the next section.[18]

The Chaplain's Role – Positive and Negative Perceptions

Contrary to the familiarity that many within the military have with the chaplain, his or her role is not always clearly understood. For example, commanders know more precisely what the supply officer, dental officer, and the general medical officer do. This is not always so for the chaplain as his or her role is much less clearly defined. The credentialing process for medical and dental professionals is much more standardized than is the process for chaplains. The baseline of educational background, approach to mission, and expertise seems to vary much more for chaplains than it does for other staff professionals.

Beyond offering divine worship services, other public religious observances, and pastoral ministry, the question that sometimes may be in the commander's mind is, "Chaplain, what is it that you actually do do Monday through Saturday?" H. Newton Malony, renowned professor of the psychology of religion and of pastoral care and counseling says, "The picture of the chaplain in the television program *M.A.S.H.* is more accurate than it is easy to admit. The chaplain is often a man looking for a role."[19] Malony says that in some cases role ambiguity leads to contempt toward the chaplain as the lack of a clearly defined role is perceived as inadequacy. It might be reasonable to assume that to whatever degree Malony's observation is true for an individual chaplain, he or she may feel obliged to participate in military operations in ways that he or she might not be fully trained

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[18] Ibid, 21.
[19] H. Newton Malony, "The Demise and Rebirth of the Chaplaincy," *Journal of Pastoral Care,* 29 (Fall 1986), 132.

or qualified to do, or compelled to do so by chaplains in supervisory roles who might in some ways feel as Malony describes.

By and large, though, military people seem to generally value their chaplain even if they do not clearly understand the chaplain's role. Chaplains are viewed as non-threatening and are generally able to create a good rapport with people.[20] They provide a kind of social lubricant that is invaluable in the spit and polish, highly regimented culture of military life. The chaplain is "safe" and service members at all levels of the chain of command are able to unburden themselves as they trust their chaplain to hold in confidence personal struggles that they think might otherwise risk their standing if it were known.

Important Cases Involving Chaplains in Iraq and Afghanistan in the Media

One does not have to look too hard to find incidents reported in the media wherein a chaplain or a military member through his or her religious activity, however innocently or naively engaged, misrepresented the U.S. military's mission, values, and purpose in a given area of operations. Such imprudent religious expression has at a minimum embarrassed the command. In more egregious situations, such breaches have even diverted attention away from the mission. It is never good when the commander's main effort has to be redirected to explain the religious activities of U.S. troops in an area of operations. In some cases, commanders have become painfully aware of the chaplain's activity. There are several highly visible cases where chaplains have done or said things that have complicated the military mission or at the least have caused some embarrassment for the command.

One such case is described in a May 2009 article that appeared in Western and Arab media under the headline, "Witness for Jesus in Afghanistan . . . U.S. soldiers have been

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[20] Stephen P. Pike, "Carrying the Cloak: Factors of command incorporation for newly reporting chaplains," (D.Min. Diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2005), Appendix A, 137-159.

encouraged to spread the message of their Christian faith among Afghanistan's predominantly Muslim population."[21] The article alleges that chaplains were planning to distribute Dari and Pashto translations of the Bible to the Afghans. The article also describes a widely circulated video of a senior U.S. Army chaplain in Afghanistan saying in a sermon, "The special forces guys - they hunt men basically. We do the same things as Christians, we hunt people for Jesus . . . we hunt them down."[22]

The Army's response to the row was to burn the Dari and Pashto translations of the Bible, offending the religious sensibilities of Muslims and Christians. Many Muslims believe that the *Taurat* and *Injeel* (Old and New Testaments) are sacred texts, albeit with error and not with the standing of the Holy Quran.[23] Regarding burning the bibles, "It was their [the chaplain's command] best judgment at the time, that the best way to deal with it, was to destroy them and I understand that they were burnt," said the senior public affairs officer for U.S. forces in Afghanistan.[24]

Cases of this kind, while relatively uncommon, are nonetheless damaging to the commander's objectives and most certainly detract from the mission. As information operations, particularly strategic communication, become more critical in building and maintaining coalition partnerships, incidents such as these accomplish at least two detrimental purposes to U.S. forces' mission objectives.[25] First, they play into the hands of our enemy as they are used to validate their suspicions about the United States' motivation,

[21] *Aljazeera*, "Witness for Jesus in Afghanistan", Aljazeera.net, 4 May 2009, http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2009/05/200952017377106909.html (accessed 15 August 09).
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ghiyathuddin Adelphi and Ernest Hahn, "The Integrity of the Bible According to the Qur'an and Hadith," http://www.answering-islam.org/Hahn/integrity.html (accessed 15 October 09).
[24] *Aljazeera*, "Witness for Jesus in Afghanistan", Aljazeera.net, 4 May 2009, http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2009/05/200952017377106909.html (accessed 15 August 09).
[25] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Information Operations*, Joint Publication 3-13, Washington D. C., February 2006, I-1-2.

thus serving as a recruiting tool for the insurgency. Second, such incidents foster mistrust in the already tenuous relationships the United States has among its coalition partners where Islam is central to their identity and culture. As former Afghan Prime Minister Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai told Reuters regarding the chaplains allegedly preparing to distribute Dari and Pashto translations of the Bible, the footage appeared to show "that in a foreign military base inside our country, people work against our religion . . . We consider this act as a direct attack on our religion that will arouse Afghans' emotions to take actions against them."[26]

The centrality of religion as a political focal point has long been recognized as growing concern in international relations. Well before United States' involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, John Esposito, Professor of Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, predicted that religion will only become more of a social and political force in international relations with Islamic countries.[27] Given the centrality of religion in much of the world, especially in Islamic countries, joint doctrine needs to be clearly stated so as to enable commanders to direct their chaplains away from areas of activity that could potentially compromise, or at the very least complicate the mission.

In building a coalition upon which our success in counterinsurgency in the region is dependent, the United States must convey that our interests are wholly political and are in no way religious. Incidents in which U.S. forces are seen to disregard Islamic sensibilities are recognized as detrimental to sustaining a viable partnership with our allies. So much so, that in his address to the Turkish Parliament during his unprecedented visit to an Islamic nation, President Obama said, "The United States is not at war with Islam and will never be. In fact,

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[26] Reuters, "U.S. denies letting troops convert Afghans," http://in.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-39408120090504?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=0&sp=true (accessed 17 Oct 09).
[27] John Esposito, "Religion and Global Affairs: Political Challenges," *SAIS Review*, 18 (Summer-Fall 1998), 21.

our partnership with the Muslim world is critical in rolling back a fringe ideology that people

of all faiths reject."[28]

Understanding the fragility that our coalition partners maintain with their own

population in supporting United States' political/diplomatic efforts demands that our forces

pay attention to the volatile nature of religious issues. Breaches of decorum, however well

intended, in these important cultural sensitivities can only serve to undermine our diplomatic,

information, and military objectives.

Analyzing the Conflicting Dynamics and Perspectives
Motivating Chaplain Activity

Department of Defense policy states "accommodation of religious practices should be

approved by commanders when accommodation will not have an adverse impact on mission

accomplishment, military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, or discipline."[29] Chaplains

come from many different backgrounds and theological perspectives. The military currently

recognizes over 220 different religious organizations that chaplains represent.[30] Ensuring

that the verities of expression inherent in religious practice do not adversely impact the

mission is the commander's responsibility.[31]

This is not an easy task as each of these different religious organizations has a

different perspective regarding evangelism, proselytizing, inter-faith dialogue, ecumenism,

and other doctrinal issues. Given this diversity of perspective and practice, joint doctrine

needs to specify as clearly as possible those religious activities that are deemed to adversely

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[28] *Aljazerra*, "Obama: U.S. Not at War with Islam," Aljazeera.net, 4 April 2009,
http://www.aljazeera.com/news/articles/34/Obama_US_not_at_war_with_Islam_.html. (accessed 16 Sep 2009).
[29] Department of Defense Directive (DODD) 1300.17, "Accommodation of Religious Practice within the
Military Service," http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/130017p.pdf (accessed 18 September 09).
[30] National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces, Home Page, http://www.ncmaf.org/index.htm,
(accessed 18 September 09).
[31]DODD 1300.17 states, "It is DoD policy that requests for accommodation of religious practices should be
approved by commanders when accommodation will not have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit
cohesion, standards, or discipline."

impact mission accomplishment as the chaplain moves throughout the operational environment.

Chaplain Access to the Operational Environment

The 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals recognized in *Katcoff v. Marsh* that the chaplain duties include responsibilities well outside of conducting worship services:

> The chaplain, because of his close relationship with the soldiers in his unit, often serves as a liaison between the soldiers and their commanders, advising the latter of racial unrest, drug pr alcohol abuse, and other problems affecting the morale and efficiency of the unit, and helps find solutions.[32]

In some forums, however, it is simply easier to exclude the chaplain than deal with the issues that arise from addressing religious issues. For example, some commanders will simply opt to exclude a prayer from a command anniversary or commemorative event, rather than deal with the potential offense the prayer might cause. Similarly, denying the chaplain access to the operational environment in order to avoid controversy or to defer to the sensibilities of the local national population is not a prudent option for the commander to pursue.

Not only does denying access to the chaplain compromise the commander's mandate to provide for the free exercise of religion as directed in military instructions and regulations, it deprives military members of a valuable asset in the field where stress, anxiety, and spiritual angst is intensified.[33] Also, without the watchful eye of the chaplain in the field to provide supervision and guidance, service members may cross the line of propriety by

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[32] *Katcoff v. Marsh*, vol. 755 (2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, 1985) , 228.

[33] The mandate for commanders to provide for the free exercise of religion ultimately derives from the First Amendment of the Constitution. More immediately, however, each service has instructions that govern the commander's responsibilities regarding religious accommodation. In the U.S. Navy, this responsibility is directed in OPNAVINST 1730.1, which says, "Commanders/commanding officers . . . *shall* provide for the free exercise of religion by implementing the policy and procedures set forth in this instruction." [emphasis added]

engaging in religious activity in which they inadvertently offend host nation and coalition allies.

In order to properly carry out his or her role, the chaplain must have wide access to the battle space. The value that a chaplain adds to the organization is dependent upon his or her ability to travel in, around, and through the area of operations. Battlefield access is required to allow chaplains to attend to the spiritual welfare of military members and to provide those sacramental/worship opportunities for which their ordaining body has sent them. Access also allows the chaplain to interface with the local population. One-on-one, face-to-face, citizen diplomacy is where the chaplain is able to build goodwill, both among U.S. military personnel and among host national and coalition partners.

Since St. Martin of Tours, the first "chaplain," historians have documented the contributions chaplains have made in building relationships with the local national community in many areas of military operations.[34] In many ways, chaplains "humanize" the victims of war and conflict. Many chaplains who are grounded in the Judeo-Christian religious tradition are motivated by the foundational theological tenet of *Imago Dei*, the idea that human beings are created in the image of God and therefore have intrinsic value. Through compassionate relief to the victims of war or disaster chaplains demonstrate this fundamental principle of their belief.

Chaplain historian John Brinsfield provides a survey of chaplain involvement with the local community from the Indian Wars and Civil War up until modern times in Korea and Vietnam.[35] Brinsfield concludes,

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[34] Herbert Thurston and Donald Atwater, eds., *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, vol. IV (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1956), 310.
[35] John W. Brinsfield, "The Army Chaplaincy and World Religions: From Individual Ministries to Chaplain Corps Doctrine," *The Army Chaplaincy*, (Winter-Spring 2009), 11-13.

Many other examples of chaplains and chaplain assistants working to aid the victims of conflict and natural disasters, regardless of their religious orientations . . . In many of these cases, the legacies of relief and encouragement the unit ministry teams left behind will be remembered at least in equal measure with the crises themselves.[36]

Chaplain-led Community Relations Projects (COMREL) continue to be a focal point of port visits as they are viewed as "strategic engagement" opportunities.[37] COMREL opportunities build trust and goodwill among partner nations. The chaplain makes an invaluable and lasting contribution by fostering understanding among culturally diverse people and contributing mutual respect and appreciation of those differences.

Proselytizing

"Proselytizing" by definition is "to induce someone to convert to one's faith; to recruit someone to join one's party, institution or cause; to recruit or convert, especially to a new faith, institution or cause."[38] Even in the most religious circles, proselytizing almost always has a negative connotation. In the military, proselytizing by chaplains is positively forbidden as stated in the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Chaplains of the Armed Forces.[39] Chaplains are trained from day one at Chaplains School that converting others to their faith is antithetical to their role and mission as chaplains. There is a caveat in the guidance, however, that some chaplains might be motivated to exploit if they are driven by their faith understanding that evangelism is their religious duty.

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[36] Ibid, 14.

[37] Commander, 7th Fleet Home Page, http://www.c7f.navy.mil/ (accessed 18 October 09).

[38] *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th Edition, s.v. "proselytize."

[39] The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Chaplains of the Armed Forces was written by the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF). NCMAF was founded in 1901 when the War Department (Department of Defense) began to require that clergy secure an "ecclesiastical endorsement" as requisite for their service in the armed forces. While NCMAF is not officially sanctioned by the U.S. Government, the Code of Ethics is recognized as authoritative. The precepts of the Code are taught at Chaplains School as a means to guide a chaplain's military ministry.

The Code of Ethics states that "I will not proselytize other religious bodies, but I retain the right to evangelize those who are non-affiliated."[40] Michael L. Weinstein, an attorney and founder of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF), says this is, "an absolutely astonishing statement on the face of it . . . to distinguish proselytizing from evangelizing is of course to create the ultimate distinction without a difference." [41] [42]

MRFF's focus is on bringing into check what Weinstein sees as a runaway abrogation of separation between Church and State in the armed forces, primarily perpetuated by Evangelical Christians serving in the military. As a response to this perceived blurring of those lines by chaplains and by some zealous religious adherents in the military, MRFF is:

> Dedicated to ensuring that all members of the United States Armed Forces fully receive the Constitutional guarantees of religious freedoms to which they and all Americans are entitled to by virtue of the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment and the "no religious test" of Article VI.[43]

It is important to note that not all Evangelicals, chaplain or laity, fit the description as Weinstein has characterized them. It is safe to say, though, that all chaplains serving in the military know the tension between the worship and practice traditions of their religious body, and the customs and decorum of religious practice in the military. It is the chaplain's responsibility to mentor, guide, teach, and monitor those of his or her religious faith as to their conformity to these standards within the military.

The issues Weinstein raises, however, do have bearing on the way in which some chaplains and believers have chosen to interface with those outside the military. Weinstein's

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[40] National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces, "The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Chaplains of the Armed Forces," http://www.ncmaf.org/policies/codeofethics.htm, (accessed 18 September 09).

[41] *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th Edition, s.v. "evangelize" is "to preach the gospel to; to convert to Christianity."

[42] Michael L. Weinstein and Davin Seay, *With God on Our Side: One Man's War against an Evangelical Coup in America's Military*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006), 127.

[43] Military Religious Freedom Foundation, Home Page, http://www.militaryreligiousfreedom.org/ (accessed 18 September 09).

point is well taken that there is little real distinction between "proselytizing," which is forbidden, and "evangelizing," which seems to be permitted by the Code of Ethics. As the military has come under scrutiny as to its policy on evangelism, particularly in the Air Force, there has been an effort to distance itself from the Code.[44] In a letter to Weinstein the Air Force lawyer said, "There is no existing Air Force policy endorsing „proselytizing' or „evangelizing the unchurched.'"[45]

Any discussion of proselytizing is curiously absent from JP 1-05. Joint commanders have actively limited proselytizing in their areas of operation. For example, "Proselytizing of any religion, faith or practice," is listed among the activities mentioned in General Order Number ONE, "Prohibited Activities for U.S. Department of Defense Personnel assigned to the Multi-National Corps Iraq (MNC-I), or present within the MNC-I Area of Responsibility (AOR)."[46]

Neither JP 1-05, nor General Order Number ONE, however, develops what "proselytizing" entails. Regarding the recent media flap over allegations of proselytizing by U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said, "It certainly is, from the United States military's perspective, not our position to ever push any specific kind of religion, period."[47]

Given the diverse theological backgrounds of chaplains, there is no unanimously agreed upon definition of "proselytizing." Some denominations are positively defined by their emphasis upon sharing the "Word of God" as they understand it. Exploiting the

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[44] *North County Times*, "Air Force distances itself from 'code of ethics' endorsing evangelizing the religiously unaffiliated," 12 Oct 2005, http://www.nctimes.com/news/local/military/article_83a9540a-c7eb-5bc8-b79b-b250972c2aad.html (accessed 18 September 09).
[45] Ibid.
[46] Headquarters, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, General Order No. 1 (GO 1), FICI CG, dtd. 4 April 09.
[47] Reuters, "U.S. denies letting troops convert Afghans," http://in.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-39408120090504?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=0&sp=true (accessed 17 October 09).

"loophole" in differentiating "proselytizing" from "evangelism" is where some chaplains and religious believers can cause embarrassment to the command as they seek to "evangelize," however nuanced their approach might be, in deployed areas. In the absence of clear doctrine that defines "proselytizing," commanders must be aware that strong differences of opinion prevail in the minds of their chaplains as to what is permissible and what is not permissible activity as regards their sharing their faith ideas with the local national population or coalition partners.

Military officers may find that their role as officer and their role as an adherent to a particular religious or political perspective or practice sometimes come into conflict. Ethicist George E. Reed of the University of San Diego argues that in such circumstances, the role of military officer always trumps.[48]

The same may be said for chaplains. If an individual chaplain feels that his or her role as a minister of a particular faith group is compromised by the restraints that the joint commander places on religious activity, then that chaplain is free to resign. No chaplain is compelled to serve in the military if he or she feels such service compromises his or her religious beliefs. The chaplain must realize, however, by virtue of his or her service in the military, mission accomplishment trumps individual religious practice.

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Conclusion – The Way Forward:
Affirming Ministry/Enhancing the Military Mission

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As a member of the military organization the chaplain's activities must contribute to mission accomplishment just as for any other officer. While the commander does not prescribe how the chaplain will conduct worship, he or she does have the responsibility to direct the chaplain toward ways in which the chaplain can contribute to the mission, away

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[48] George E. Reed, Ethics Conference, (lecture, Naval War College, Newport, RI, 17 August 2009).

from those activities that might compromise the mission or the chaplain's unique role within the institution.

When the chaplain fully functions within the parameters for which the role was established, that of facilitating the free exercise of religion for all, caring for the wounded, ministering to the sick and dying, and serving as a conduit of understanding between differing cultures by providing opportunities for direct engagement with religious and community leaders, he or she is best serving the needs of the individual service member and thereby integral to unit morale and to mission accomplishment.

In the future, if chaplains are going to be increasingly asked to perform the advising responsibilities outlined in JP 1-05, then a formalized training process that prepares them for that specific task should be instituted. Neither current professional military, nor post graduate education programs offer the level of specified training required for the task. Once a training track is identified, perhaps chaplains could be better prepared for task by the development of an Additional Qualification Designator (AQD), which would identify individual chaplains who have had specialized anthropology; and sociology and psychology of religion training for a particular area of operations. The standardization of training and qualification would give the commander some assurance of the chaplain's capability to credibly asses and advise on religious matters in a given area of operations.

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